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## NOTES FROM THE MEDICAL PRESS

IN CHARGE OF

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**NITROUS OXIDE ANESTHESIA IN OBSTETRICS.**—In a report in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* it is stated that the administration of nitrous oxide during labor retards the process very little, if at all, it does not produce muscular relaxation beyond that of normal sleep. Its action is rapid and transitory, not irritating or unpleasant to inhale, gives relief from pain and accelerates labor without disastrous results. There is no predisposition to post-partum hemorrhage and involution is not delayed.

**COSTUME OF THE VOLUNTARY NURSE.**—The same journal, in its letter from Paris, notes that the complaints with regard to the conduct of certain volunteer nurses of the Red Cross have been brought to the attention of the minister of war. These women wore their nurses' costumes in the street for the sake of attracting attention. He has consequently forbidden the wearing of these uniforms outside the institution to which the wearer belongs. He gives as his reason the necessity of protecting from undeserved criticism the real nurses who shun publicity and who, by their devoted service, have won the respect and gratitude of the medical profession, the sick and wounded soldiers and the public.

**PROPHYLAXIS OF TYPHOID.**—A Berlin medical journal says that the most important single prophylactic measure in the prevention of typhoid is the washing of the hands after defecation and before eating. If all were trained to do this systematically many illnesses other than typhoid would be avoided also.

**SERUM TREATMENT OF VOMITING IN PREGNANCY.**—*The Medical Record* states that this treatment has been used with success in the case of uncontrollable vomiting during pregnancy. Horse serum was tested in 1911 for this purpose with good results. The advantage of the use of blood serum obtained from pregnant women has also been demonstrated.

**PRACTICAL BREAST MILK PROBLEMS.**—In an article in *The Medical Record* it is stated that the diet of the mother has an important effect upon the health of the nursling, particularly in the early stages of lactation. It is considered wise to forbid the use of fruit and its deriva-

tives, as jellies, fruit juice, etc., to withhold spices and highly flavored vegetables when digestive disturbances are manifest. An ample and varied dietary can be provided from fresh meat, eggs, fish, potato, rice, milk, macaroni, cereals, cream, butter, various forms of bread, corn starch, tapioca, sago and other starchy foods. Bland diet of this kind should be used during the first month and new articles of food added very cautiously, one only each day, the effect upon the child being noted.

**CARE OF RUBBER ARTICLES.**—*The Interstate Medical Journal*, quoting from a foreign contemporary, says that the deterioration of rubber tubing, gloves, etc., can be lessened by keeping in a cool place and kneading them thoroughly once a month. A more efficacious method is to place them in a deep vessel of enameled ware made with a false bottom, on which the articles are laid. Beneath this is placed a layer of absorbent cotton saturated with coal oil. The false bottom is perforated so that the rubber things upon it are enveloped in the vapor of petroleum, a tight cover on the vessel preventing the escape of the vapor. The rubber retains its elasticity indefinitely if the oil is renewed every three months; it must not touch the articles. Rubber that has begun to get hard and brittle may be softened by kneading it in a warm 5 per cent solution of ammonium chloride and then in a warm 5 per cent solution of glycerine. It should drain and dry in a cool dark place.

**BURNS.**—A writer in *The Medical Record* states that the most convenient local application for burns is a saturated solution of baking soda in water with immersion of the burned surface if possible. A mixture of bicarbonate of soda and cornstarch, a teaspoonful each to a quart of water may be used. The dressing should be kept wet with the solution, which is applied freely at the burned area. After five or six hours an emulsion of ichthyol, half a dram, olive oil or cotton seed oil, half a pint and lime water, half a pint, may be used during the stage of acute inflammation. Later a healing ointment can be applied. In an emergency a coat of white lead, as used for painting buildings, may be poured over the burn.

**SPRAINS.**—*The Missouri State Medical Association Journal* has a paper on sprains in which it is stated that the modern and correct treatment is by proper strapping, exercise and massage. In regard to massage, by beginning pressure at the upper part and gradually descending in stroking, much of the effusion can be pressed out at each sitting. Usually in a few days the swelling is gone. When properly strapped an attempt should be made to walk and this should be per-

severed in notwithstanding the pain, which will diminish at each succeeding attempt.

INFANT MORTALITY.—*The Canadian Medical Association Journal* says that the decimation of armies by war, and of nations by pestilence, is a tragedy which is exceeded by the infant mortality which we regard with calmness. A new-born child has less chance of living a week than a man of ninety and of living a year than a man of eighty. Over 3,200,000 infants, less than a year old, perish annually in the countries forming the civilized world or, in other words, one infant dies every ten seconds, every hour of the twenty-four.

THE RÖNTGEN RAY AND INFANT FEEDING.—At a meeting of the New York Academy of Medicine it was stated that radiography has shown the fallacy of the old idea that the stomach is vertical in infancy. The posture of the child after feeding is therefore of importance. It is recommended to hold it upright against the mother's shoulder to give an opportunity to get rid of an accumulation of gas, and to interrupt the feeding, if necessary, for this purpose. Colic, indigestion and regurgitation may be lessened or prevented by posture. If regurgitation is feared, the child should be placed in bed in the prone position, with the head of the bed somewhat elevated.

THE RELATION OF DIET TO CANCER.—Dr. Duncan L. Bulkley, in a paper in *The Medical Record*, says that cancer has increased enormously as diet has become more luxurious, especially in the eating of meat. It is stated that mice living on a rice diet cannot be inoculated with cancer, while those placed on a diet of meat easily fall victims. He treats both primary and recurrent cancer with a vegetarian diet with gratifying results and believes that the excessive use of meat produces cancer in some cases. He advocates the cooking of potatoes in their skins to retain the potash and other salts which otherwise escape into the water. He also gives acetate of potassium to supply the element of potash.

IMMEDIATE RELIEF FROM PAIN UNDER RÖNTGEN RAYS.—A writer in a Berlin medical journal says that not enough attention has been paid to the analgesic action of the Röntgen rays. A sprained hip joint causing constant pain was immediately relieved by exposure to the rays. There was no pain for a week, then a mild recurrence which subsided after a second exposure. It has also been effectual in relieving pain in tumors, leukemia and pelvic disease. It will probably prove equally potent in neuralgia, gout, deforming arthritis, furunculosis, malarial spleen and tuberculosis.